

FIREARMS



FROM THE COLLECTIONS OF
THE PRINCE OF LIECHTENSTEIN

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THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART
THE COLLECTIONS OF THE PRINCE OF LIECHTENSTEIN



This watercolor by the Viennese artist Rudolf von Alt illustrates the Liechtenstein firearms collection as it was arranged—in panoplies—on the walls of the Baroque palace at Feldsberg in 1845.
10¹/₄ x 13¹/₄ in. (26.1 x 33.5 cm.). *Inv. no. 2358*

THE PRINCELY COLLECTIONS of Liechtenstein include one of the last great armories in Central Europe to survive in the possession of the original family. The armory comprises plate armor and edged weapons, firearms and artillery, but it is the hand firearms (guns and pistols) that are of greatest historical and artistic interest. The firearms collection is one of the largest extant, comprising more than one thousand examples ranging in date from the sixteenth through the nineteenth century and coming from every corner of Europe: France, the Netherlands, Spain, England, Denmark, Italy, and the territories of Central Europe that constituted the Holy Roman Empire. More than three hundred firearms by Viennese makers are still present in the collection, as is an important group of arms made by the otherwise little-known gunmakers active in Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia. There is also a small group of oriental guns that are probably booty from the Austro-Turkish wars of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The international character of the collection can be accounted for, on one hand, by an active trade in firearms and, on the other hand, by the existence of the princes' interest in weapons of different origins and mechanical types. Though the Liechtenstein armory contains fewer examples of richly decorated arms than are found in the great dynastic collections in Vienna, Munich, Dresden, Copenhagen, and Stockholm—all now state-owned public museums—it presents a more accurate picture of the firearms collections assembled by the high nobility in Central Europe in the age of the Baroque.

The majority of the Liechtenstein firearms are sporting weapons—for the hunt and target shooting—that were collected in the 1600s and 1700s by the princes for their personal use and for use by their families, retainers, and guests at hunting parties given on the princes' vast estates in Austria, Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia. These were designed as luxury arms, technically efficient and aesthetically pleasing, and many bear the names of the finest gunmakers of their time. Some of the pieces are so richly embellished—the target rifle on pages 16–18 by Johann Michael Maucher (1645–1701), for example—that they appear to have been created solely as works of art. Such weapons required the skills not only of a barrelmaker, lockmaker, and gunstocker, but of specialized designers and decorators as well, and they were therefore collected and appreciated as virtuoso demonstrations of craftsmanship. The possession of such skillfully made, elaborately ornamented, and invariably costly firearms reflected on the taste, wealth, and social status of the owner.

The Liechtenstein firearms are referred to in contemporary documents as the *Gewehrhammer*, or cabinet of arms. As the documents indicate, the weapons were kept together, presumably in a single room, where they were arranged in racks or in storage boxes. The collection was cared for by the prince's gunmaker, who was responsible for keeping the arms clean and in working order and for making inventories. For purposes of record keeping the firearms were frequently numbered. The inventory numbers, some of which are still visible, were usually incised, branded, or painted on the stock, or engraved on the metal mounts.

Seventeenth- and eighteenth-century inventories of the Liechtenstein *Gewehrhammer* provide important insights into the patronage of the individual princes and the size, scope, and diversity of their collections. The inventories also help to establish the provenance of the firearms, which passed by inheritance from one member of the Liechtenstein family to another. The inventories appear to have been dictated, presumably by the court gunmaker, and describe in the briefest of terms the type of firearm, its mechanism, its maker, and a few salient features of its appearance if deemed important for purposes of identification. The inventories also offer valuable information

regarding the existence of garnitures—sets of similarly ornamented firearms, which usually consisted of a flintlock fowling piece and a matching pair of holster pistols. In addition, the more important *Gewehrkkammern* often had extensive series of sporting guns or rifles, numbering as many as twelve in a single set, for use during hunting parties. The Liechtenstein collection preserves parts of two such series, including one originally composed of at least six flintlock fowling pieces by Johann Lobinger (active 1745–88) and another by Augustin Scheffl (active 1728–59), both Viennese gunmakers working for Prince Joseph Wenzel von Liechtenstein.

The history of the Liechtenstein *Gewehrkkammer* begins with Karl von Liechtenstein (1569–1627), the first prince. The Liechtensteins traced their ancestry to the twelfth century, but it was Prince Karl I who established their fame and fortune. A politician and soldier in the service of the Hapsburg emperors, he was rewarded for his loyalty with the title of Prince of the Empire in 1608. In the wake of the Battle of the White Mountain (1620), in which the Catholic imperial forces quelled a Protestant rebellion in Bohemia, Karl was named Governor of that region (1622–27). In 1622 he was elected to the Order of the Golden Fleece. During his years of imperial service Karl's land holdings expanded quickly to include the duchies of Troppau (in 1613) and Jägerndorf (in 1623), both in Silesia (today part of Czechoslovakia). By the time of Karl's death the Liechtensteins were the greatest landowners in Moravia. It is not surprising that this powerful and wealthy nobleman possessed a significant collection of arms, as is well documented in two *Gewehrkkammer* inventories.

The 1596 inventory of the armory at Karl's palace in Eisgrub, Moravia (today in Czechoslovakia), makes note of 138 firearms. Among these are mentioned a large Danish gun with decoration in ivory; four Italian guns; and a German-style pistol, which "the Prince used daily." In addition to the Prince's personal weapons, the armory included equipment for his bodyguard: ten long guns for *Landsknechts* (German foot soldiers) and twenty-six "new long harquebusier guns." The second inventory, dated 1605, lists seven German guns embellished with silver plaques and the Liechtenstein coat of arms, together with their holsters, powder flasks, and bullet pouches trimmed with tassels in red and gold, the colors of the Liechtenstein livery. The 1605 inventory provides the earliest known reference to the use of the family coat of arms on weapons (*for later examples, see pages 26–29*).

The majority of Prince Karl's personal firearms were wheellock hunting rifles and cavalry pistols. Unfortunately, none of the many wheellock arms that remain in the collection can be identified positively as having belonged to this Prince. There is, however, a pair of German wheellock pistols, from about 1580–90, that may be deemed truly fit for a prince (*pages 10–11*). The locks and barrels are etched and gilt, and the stocks are inlaid with an intricate marquetry composed of tiny pieces of engraved staghorn forming a dense foliate design; larger plaques of horn on the grips and forestocks are engraved with figures and animals. During the sixteenth century, before the introduction of specialized firearms pattern books, the stock decorators drew upon a wide variety of engraved designs for their ornament. On this pair of pistols the allegorical figures of Theology and Jurisprudence on the grips were copied from prints issued by the Parisian engraver Étienne Delaune (active about 1540–83). The quality of the craftsmanship and the range of motifs employed in the ornamentation of these pistols make them more than utilitarian weapons; they are indeed works of art appropriate for a princely *Kunstkkammer*, or cabinet of art.

Also dating from the late 1500s is the wheellock carbine (*page 12*) made for Archduke Matthias of Austria (1557–1619), who became Emperor in 1612. This short gun, only 26¹¹/₁₆ inches (67.8

centimeters) long, is distinguished by its graceful scroll-shaped butt and its inlay of staghorn incorporating the emblems of the Order of the Golden Fleece: crossed ragged staves, and fire steels and flints striking sparks. The Archduke's monogram is engraved on a plaque beneath the stock. This is one of five similarly decorated guns (the others are in Paris and Berlin) that were apparently made for the Archduke shortly after he became a member of the Order in 1596. Since Karl I was appointed councillor to Matthias in 1592 and was his ally during the internecine struggle for power with the Archduke's brother Rudolf II (1552–1612, Emperor from 1576), it has been suggested, but without documentary evidence, that this carbine may have been a present from Matthias to the Prince.

Among the early seventeenth-century firearms in the collection, the most colorful is the wheellock sporting rifle with an ebony-veneered stock inlaid with engraved mother-of-pearl and plaques of white and green-stained staghorn (*page 13*). This rifle, which dates from about 1610–20, belongs to a group of Nürnberg firearms decorated in a similar manner that is attributed by modern collectors to the Master of the Castles, so-called because of the castles that frequently appear as motifs on some of his gunstocks. The ornamentation on this example, which includes couples dressed in contemporary European fashions and engaged in hunting, drinking, and various bucolic pursuits, has a naïve charm, and the figure of a turbaned Turkish warrior on the butt plate lends it an exotic flavor.

Karl I appears to have had a keen interest in French firearms, perhaps the result of a visit he made to France in 1588. The inventory of 1605 lists eight French guns, and in 1610 a payment is recorded for three pairs of French pistols. Several early seventeenth-century French wheellock pistols in the Liechtenstein collection may have belonged to this Prince. The finest of these is a magnificent pair dating from about 1620, the work of an unidentified maker whose mark—a crowned fleur-de-lis—is struck on the lockplate (*page 14*). The decoration of the honey-colored fruitwood stocks is especially beautiful. The wood is incised and inlaid with brass and silver wire forming meandering patterns of interlaced strapwork that encloses sprays of palm and laurel branches and trophies of arms; plaques and bands of stamped silver sheet embellish the escutcheons, the tips of the forestocks, and the pommels. The barrels are chiseled with foliage and trophies inlaid with silver studs; they retain traces of gilding. The lock parts are blued and gilt.

In addition to the inventories, several other documents record the role that Karl I played as a patron of the gunmaker's art. The expense accounts for the years 1622 and 1623, when Karl was Governor of Bohemia, indicate large payments totaling 861 florins to the gunmaker Martin Eyser of Prague, and another document of 1626 mentions 400 muskets for which the Prince was awaiting delivery. Both references are to arms presumably ordered for troops in his service. In 1625 and 1626, Karl also purchased three guns and two powder flasks for his son and heir, Karl Eusebius (1611–84). Apparently Karl Eusebius had learned to shoot at an early age and was already accumulating a firearms collection of his own.

Prince Karl Eusebius von Liechtenstein followed his father's example as a firearms enthusiast. His *Gewehrhammer* inventory of 1657 lists a total of sixty-four guns, three unmounted barrels, and twenty-nine pistols in his palaces in Feldsberg, Lower Austria (now in Czechoslovakia), and Vienna. The majority of these were wheellock hunting arms of Central European origin, only a few of which can be identified today in the collection. During Karl Eusebius's lifetime there was a noticeable change in the decoration of Germanic firearms, marked in particular by a move away from the exuberant, polychromatic stock ornamentation of staghorn and mother-of-pearl favored in the early seventeenth century. The new fashion emphasized the natural grain of the

exotic woods used to veneer the stocks, and carved rather than inlaid decoration became a standard embellishment. The effect was at once somber but stately. The wheellock firearms made by the so-called Master of the Animal-Head Scroll, an unidentified gunstock decorator active in Austria from about 1620 to 1660, reflect this trend. Two rifles and a pistol by this prolific master are still in the Liechtenstein collection. The finest of these (*page 15*) has a silver-damascened barrel and lockplate, and a stock carved in relief with a dense pattern of scrolling tendrils ending in animals' heads, the distinguishing hallmark of this gunstocker's style.

Another wheellock sporting rifle in the collection (*page 19*), with a fruitwood stock stained black in imitation of costly ebony, has the scene of a stag hunt carved on the cheekpiece. This example, dating from about 1670, can be attributed on stylistic grounds to the Bohemian town of Eger (now Cheb, in Czechoslovakia) because of the distinctive etched decoration of the lockplate; the overly long, pierced, and chiseled steel cocking lever; and the style of the wood carving, which resembles that on the famous carved furniture produced in Eger. The lockplate is etched with the coat of arms of an unidentified noble family.

The tradition-bound sportsmen of Central Europe continued to use the wheellock rifle as a hunting weapon until the middle of the eighteenth century (*for a late example, see page 31*), long after it had been abandoned elsewhere. By the middle of the seventeenth century the flintlock ignition system, probably invented in France about 1610–20, began to supersede the older, more complicated, and costlier wheellock. Karl Eusebius's inventories include a number of flintlock arms, among them two pairs of pistols by Jacques Lamarre, a Parisian gunmaker who worked in Vienna from 1675/76 to 1700 for the court of Emperor Leopold I (1640–1705, reigned from 1658). One of these may be the pair of breech-loading flintlock pistols signed on the locks **LA MARRE A VIENNE** (*pages 20, 21*). These pistols are purely French in design and were probably made about 1680. The stocks are of root walnut; the mounts are a combination of engraved silver and chiseled, pierced, and gilt steel. The pierced triggerguards incorporate the letter **L**, surrounded by the collar of the Order of the Golden Fleece and surmounted by an imperial crown, indicating that the pistols were created for Emperor Leopold. The princes of Liechtenstein also employed Lamarre and collected his arms in significant numbers, but these pistols seem to have been a gift from the Emperor to one of the princes.

Prince Johann Adam Andreas von Liechtenstein (1657–1712), son of Karl Eusebius, inherited his father's firearms collection and made important additions to it. In 1695, for example, he purchased for the then considerable sum of 1,400 florins the entire *Gewehrhammer* of Count Brandis, which consisted of five blunderbusses, sixteen flintlock guns, five extra-long fowling pieces, six target rifles, a pair of pistols, and two short wheellock rifles known as coach guns. Payments were made that same year to Lamarre to clean and repair the newly acquired firearms. Three years later, in 1698, Lamarre was again hired by the Prince to mount two Spanish barrels. The Liechtenstein archives also record payments by this Prince to the Viennese gunsmiths Johann Waas, Caspar Zelner, Lorenz Bauer, Johann Jakob Zemerich, Dominik Asomus, Christoph Feiller, and Felix Meier.

The inventory of Prince Johann Adam's collection of firearms at Feldsberg, drawn up following his death in 1712, reveals a great deal about the size, scope, and organization of the princely *Gewehrhammer*. The inventory lists a total of 187 guns and 28 pistols, categorized by group: flintlock guns, wheellock rifles, blunderbusses, carbines, pistols, and Turkish firearms. As if to denote their special character, the Spanish and the Italian guns are described separately. Spanish and Italian firearms were internationally renowned for the quality of their barrels, and

every respectable *Gewehrhammer* had numerous examples of them. Eighteen Italian firearms are listed, each of them inscribed with some variant of the name Lazarino Cominazzo, the most famous of the well-known barrelmaking clan that worked in Gardone, near Brescia.

One of the prized possessions in Prince Johann Adam's *Gewehrhammer* was doubtless the wheellock rifle attributed to Johann Michael Maucher, an ivory carver and gunstock decorator from Schwäbisch-Gmünd. It remains one of the masterpieces in the Liechtenstein collection (*pages 16–18*). This gun, which dates from about 1670, shows Maucher's characteristic use of carved and pierced ivory plaques set into a cherry-wood stock that is carved and inlaid with engraved mother-of-pearl. The ornament includes the imperial eagle and various themes related to the hunt (*page 18*), such as the conversion of Saint Hubert, patron of hunters, and the goddess Diana at her bath surprised by the hunter Actaeon (a scene derived from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*). The ivory figure of Fortune on the butt-trap cover (*page 17*) is carved in high relief, almost as an independent sculpture. The depiction of this rifle in a hunting still life (*page 16*) painted for the Prince by the Dutch artist Dirk Valkenburg (1675–1721) in 1698 attests to the significance attached to the gun by its owner.

Among the Liechtenstein arms that can be ascribed to the lifetime (if not to the direct patronage) of Prince Johann Adam, several are notable for the quality of their chiseled ironwork. One of these is a pair of all-steel flintlock belt pistols (*page 22*) by Villalonga, a gunmaker and decorator who presumably worked in Brescia during the last quarter of the seventeenth century. The hollow iron stocks are engraved with scrollwork, the mounts pierced and chiseled in relief with masks, acanthus foliage, and on the pommel, a classical bust. The ornament on the back of each grip includes a flying putto holding a banderole (inscribed *Villa* on one pistol and *longa* on the other), a figure copied from a firearms pattern book published in Paris in 1660.

Another gun with chiseled iron decoration is the flintlock fowling piece (*pages 24, 25*), dating from about 1710, by Armand Bongarde of Düsseldorf (active 1678–d. 1727), court gunmaker to the Elector Palatine, Duke Johann Wilhelm of Neuburg (1658–1716). Bongarde was the leading German gunmaker working in the classical French manner of the late seventeenth century, and he surpassed many of his Parisian counterparts in the virtuosity of his iron chiseling. Bongarde was recognized throughout Central Europe as one of the most inventive and skillful gunmakers of his generation, and his arms were eagerly collected. A number of them were once owned by the Liechtensteins. Three Bongarde guns are recorded in the *Gewehrhammer* inventory of Prince Emanuel von Liechtenstein (1700–71), and a garniture comprising a gun and a pair of holster pistols was owned by Prince Joseph Wenzel; the present gun, the only example by Bongarde remaining in the Liechtenstein armory, is probably one of those mentioned. The iron mounts on the gun are chased in relief with trumpet-blowing putti, bound captives, and trophies of arms, symbolic of victory and fame. The ornament on the barrel alludes to contemporary history: a figure of a warrior in classical armor crushes beneath his left foot a rooster—the Gallic cock, emblem of France, the adversary of the Holy Roman Empire during the War of the Spanish Succession (1701–14).

Prince Joseph Wenzel (1696–1772) was the last of the great Liechtenstein collectors of firearms. A military man and a diplomat, he was a field marshal, director general of the Austrian artillery, and imperial ambassador in Berlin and Paris. The three surviving inventories of this Prince's *Gewehrhammer*, dated 1751, 1761, and 1766, reveal the declining popularity of the wheellock sporting rifle in favor of the smoothbore flintlock fowling piece. Joseph Wenzel's collection included many French flintlocks, some of which he probably acquired during his years in Paris (1737–40). Among these are examples by the famous Parisian gunmakers Bertrand

Pirabe (active 1663–1725) and Laurent le Languedoc (active 1685–1730/40), as well as a number of examples by such provincial French gunmakers as Aubert at Lunéville, LeLorrain at Valence, and Olivier at Montpellier. Joseph Wenzel also possessed a number of English firearms dating from the first half of the eighteenth century, among them pieces by the London makers Lewis Barbar or his son James, John Williams, William Turvey, and John Harman. There is even a Scottish example, an all-metal belt pistol by Lindsay of Montrose, dating from the late seventeenth century, which must have been a curiosity in the collection.

There are more than one hundred Viennese firearms listed in the inventories of Prince Joseph Wenzel, among them important examples by Johann Georg Keiser (*page 26*), Felix Meier (*page 27*), Joseph Hamerl (*pages 28–30*), and Marcus Zelner (*page 31*). From the time of Karl Eusebius, the princes of Liechtenstein had been lavish patrons of the gunmakers of Vienna. The gunmakers' guild in that city was founded relatively late—in 1661—and it was not until about 1700 that a distinctly Viennese style of firearms decoration evolved, one that was ornate and colorful without compromising the technical efficiency of the weapons. Dark-red walnut stocks were typically mounted with gilt-brass furniture, cast and chiseled with elaborate Baroque strapwork and foliate scrolls, and the locks were often etched with richly detailed hunting scenes inspired by the engravings of Johann Elias Ridinger (1698–1767). Many of the guns were mounted either with genuine Spanish barrels or with locally made Spanish-style barrels that had blued surfaces and gold-punched makers' marks.

The leading Viennese gunmaker was Johann Georg Keiser (1647–about 1740), whose longevity is confirmed by a flintlock gun in the Liechtenstein collection (inv. no. 3883), inscribed on the barrel “*alt 93 Jahr*” (93 years old). From an earlier period, about 1690–1700, is a pair of plain, robustly constructed holster pistols (*page 26*) made for Prince Philipp Erasmus von Liechtenstein (1664–1704). The Prince was carrying these pistols when he was killed, during a skirmish with French troops near Castelnovo, in Lombardy, on January 9, 1704. The event is recorded on the engraved silver plaques that Philipp Erasmus's son Joseph Wenzel had mounted on the grips. Each plaque is inscribed (in German), “These pistols, together with the funeral horse, were given in 1704, after the action near Castelnovo at which my father died, to the commanding officer General Guido Starhemberg, who gave them to me as a memorial in 1732.”

Some of the finest firearms in the *Gewehrhammer* of Prince Joseph Wenzel were acquired as gifts. One of these is a French flintlock fowling piece of about 1730–40 (*page 23*) by Laurent le Languedoc. The barrel is Spanish, made by one of the Peresteva family of barrelsmiths in Barcelona, and is blued, damascened in silver, and encrusted with gold. The decoration includes the coat of arms of Charles of Lorraine, Count of Armagnac, called Prince Charles (1684–1752); the arms are surrounded by collars of the orders of Saint Michel and Saint Esprit (bestowed upon Charles in 1724) and by emblems of his role as *Grand Écuyer de France* (Grand Master of the Royal Stables), a title he received in 1712. The inscription (in French), “To his highness Monseigneur Prince Charles,” on the forward part of the barrel indicates that the gun was a gift; it is likely that it was subsequently presented by the *Grand Écuyer* to Prince Joseph Wenzel during the latter's stay in France.

The most remarkable of Joseph Wenzel's firearms is the set of six Spanish guns (*pages 32–37, 39*) given to him by Emperor Joseph II (1741–90, reigned from 1765) on October 30, 1767. Each of the six guns was made by a different craftsman in Madrid—Nicolás Bis (active 1692–

d. 1726), Juan Fernández (active 1711–d. 1739), Francisco Baeza y Bis (active 1730–d. 1765), Gabriel Algora (active 1733–d. 1761), Juan Santos (active 1721–56), and Joaquin de Zelaia (active 1747–d. 1760)—all but one of whom (Santos) held the title of Gunmaker to the King of Spain. Datable between about 1710 and 1753, the six fowling pieces are illustrative of the finest Spanish gunmaking during the first half of the eighteenth century, and as a set they are unique. The barrels are of typical Spanish style, their surfaces blued and damascened in gold with foliage and inscriptions that include the gunmaker's name and the date of manufacture; the gold mark and countermark of each maker are stamped at the breech (*pages 36, 37*). The locks and the decoration of the guns follow the French taste that prevailed in Madrid under the Bourbon monarchs, beginning with the accession of Philip V in 1700.

The locks are of the *a la moda* type: the internal mechanism is constructed as an indigenous Spanish miquelet, but the outward appearance is of a French flintlock. The lock on the gun by Santos (*page 35, third from top*) is a variant, known as the *tres modas* type, which has the large external spring of the miquelet. The locks and the stock mounts of all six guns are chiseled in bright steel, usually against a matte gold background, with motifs inspired by French gunmakers' pattern books. On his gun dated 1734, Francisco Bis, for example, utilized and, in fact, copied quite literally (*pages 32, 33*) the series of engraved firearms designs published in Paris by Simonin in 1693 and by DeLacollombe in 1705. The six Spanish guns in the Liechtenstein collection are preserved in pristine condition in the same elaborate storage boxes (*one of them illustrated on page 39*) in which they were presented to Joseph Wenzel.

Whereas war, political turmoil, and neglect have led to the destruction or dispersal of most of the great hereditary arms collections in Central Europe, the survival of the Liechtenstein *Gewehrhammer* can be attributed in part to the esteem in which the firearms were held by generations of princes. Beginning with Karl I in the early seventeenth century, the princely art collections—including the *Gewehrhammer*—were legally protected from dispersion under the terms of a *Fideikommiss*, or entailed estate. In this manner the collections passed intact by inheritance. Thus the arms collection today comprises the aggregate of the holdings of a long line of princes, including those of Prince Hartmann von Liechtenstein (1666–1728) at Niederabsdorf, Prince Emanuel von Liechtenstein (1700–71) at Schloss Loosdorf, and Prince Karl Rudolf Franz von Liechtenstein (1827–99) at Mährisch-Kromau.

During the nineteenth century the reigning princes kept the majority of their firearms in the Liechtenstein palace at Feldsberg. The display at Feldsberg is recorded in a watercolor (*page 2*) painted in 1845 by the Viennese artist Rudolf von Alt (1812–1905), which shows the firearms arranged on the walls in semicircular panoplies, following the romantic fashion of that era. Portions of the Feldsberg *Gewehrhammer*, as well as most of the famous Liechtenstein artillery, were transferred to Schloss Vaduz in the Principality of Liechtenstein in 1911, upon completion of the refurbishing of the castle as a private residence for Prince Johannes II von Liechtenstein (1840–1929). The last of the Feldsberg arms were moved to Vaduz during the Second World War. The collection is now in the possession of the present Reigning Prince, Franz Josef II von Liechtenstein (b. 1906). The *Gewehrhammer* deserves further study, not only on its technical and artistic merits, but also for the insights it has to offer into the collecting of firearms and the patronage of the gunmaker's craft by the princes of Liechtenstein.



This pair of wheellock pistols, made about 1580–90, rank among the most splendidly decorated German firearms of the late sixteenth century. The barrels and locks are etched and gilt, and the stocks are completely covered in foliate scrolls inhabited by animals, humans, and grotesque creatures. The allegorical figures of Theology and Jurisprudence on the grips (opposite, above) and the river-gods on the left side of the stocks (opposite, below) are copied after engravings by Étienne Delaune. Length 20¹/₈ in. (51.2 cm.). *Inv. nos.* 142, 143





This wheellock carbine was made for Archduke Matthias of Austria, who became Emperor in 1612. A German work dating from the late 1590s, it is distinguished by the elegance of its scroll-shaped butt and by the decoration of the stock, with staghorn inlays incorporating the emblems of the Order of the Golden Fleece (crossed ragged staves, and flints and fire steels striking sparks), of which Matthias was a member from 1596. The Archduke's crowned monogram is found beneath the stock (right). Length $26\frac{11}{16}$ in. (67.8 cm.). *Inv. no. 3603*



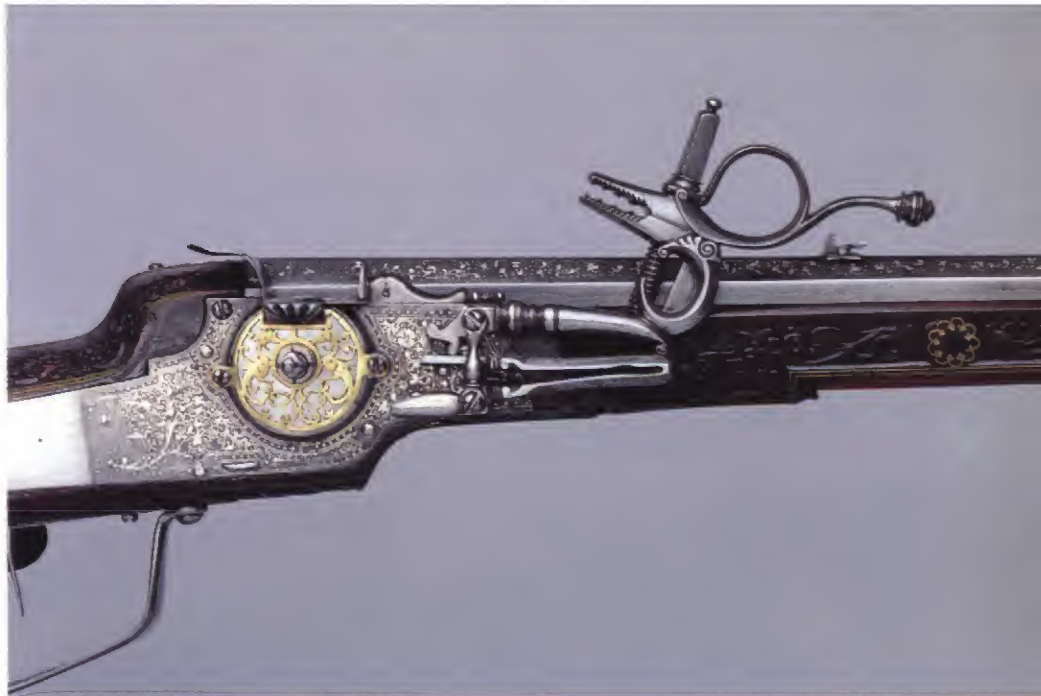


The stock of this wheellock sporting rifle, covered with marquetry of ebony, mother-of-pearl, and staghorn (some stained green), is one of a large group of Nürnberg firearms mounted by the same unidentified gunstocker, the so-called Master of the Castles. This example, dating from about 1610–20, includes figures of hunters and merrymakers, as well as a Turk on the butt plate (left). Length 39³/₄ in. (101 cm.). *Inv. no. 3822*



The lockplates of this pair of wheellock pistols are struck with the crowned fleur-de-lis mark of a French gunmaker working about 1620. The fruitwood stocks are inlaid with brass wire, silver wire, and silver sheet embossed with trophies of arms and foliage. Length $24\frac{15}{16}$ in. (63.9 cm.). *Inv. nos. 865, 866*

This wheellock sporting rifle is a typical work by the unidentified Austrian gunstock decorator known as the Master of the Animal-Head Scroll, so-called because of his preference for carved ornament of meandering scrolls ending in animals' heads. The stock of the rifle, which dates from about 1640, is further embellished with brass wire; its barrel and lock are damascened in silver. Length 41³/₈ in. (105.1 cm.). *Inv. no.* 170





One of the masterpieces of the Liechtenstein collection today, the wheellock rifle above, dating from about 1670, was especially treasured by Prince Johann Adam Andreas von Liechtenstein. A characteristic work by the gunstock decorator and sculptor Johann Michael Maucher of Schwäbisch-Gmünd, this rifle is portrayed in a still life painted for that prince in 1698 by the Dutch artist Dirk Valkenburg. Length 47½ in. (120.6 cm.). *Inv. no. 859*

Detail of *Still Life with a Dead Heron and a Dog Barking at a Bird* (showing the rifle by Maucher) by Dirk Valkenburg (1675–1721). Oil on canvas, 53⅛ x 71¼ in. (135 x 181 cm.). *Inv. no. 765*





Maucher's talent as a sculptor is demonstrated by the high-relief ivory figure of Fortune (right) on the sliding butt-trap cover of the rifle illustrated on the facing page. Carved on the underside of the cherry stock (above) is a grimacing mask with mother-of-pearl eyes and teeth of stag-horn that adds a touch of surprise and whimsy to the decoration.





Four details of the wheellock rifle illustrated on the previous two pages demonstrate the extent to which every inch of Maucher's gunstocks was embellished. Hunting subjects were his favorite decorative theme, as evidenced on this example by the figure of Saint Hubert, patron of hunters (top, left); the depiction of a lion hunt (top, right); and the story of Diana and Actaeon (above, right). The cheekpiece (above, left) is inlaid with a double-headed eagle, symbolic of the Holy Roman Empire, and is rendered in mother-of-pearl, staghorn, silver, and copper.

Made in the Bohemian town of Eger about 1670, the wheellock sporting rifle shown on the opposite page reflects the local preference for elaborately etched lockplates and for stocks carved in relief with hunting scenes. Length $40\frac{3}{8}$ in. (102.5 cm.). *Inv. no. 861*





The pair of breech-loading flintlock pistols opposite, made about 1680, exemplify the French style of gunmaking as practiced by Jacques Lamarre, a Paris-trained craftsman who was Imperial Court Gunmaker in Vienna from 1675/76 to 1700. Details show the blued barrels engraved and gilded with figures of Mars and Minerva (opposite, bottom left), the pierced and chiseled pommel (opposite, bottom center), and the pierced triggerguard bearing the monogram of Emperor Leopold I (opposite, bottom right). The illustration on this page demonstrates the workings of a breechloader, in which the barrel is unscrewed in front of the chamber to facilitate loading. The barrel is attached to the stock by a sliding bar, which prevents the barrel's separation or accidental loss. Length $20\frac{7}{8}$ in. (53.1 cm.). *Inv. nos. 283, 284*





These iron-stocked belt pistols were made in the late seventeenth century by the little-known Brescian gunmaker Villalonga. The maker's signature is found on the lockplate and again on the grips of the stocks, which are engraved with foliage and with putti holding banderoles inscribed *Villa* and *longa* (far left). The pommels (one example at left) are chiseled in relief with the head of a wreath-crowned youth, possibly a Roman emperor, and attest to Villalonga's mastery of the metalworking craft. Length $13\frac{1}{16}$ in. (33.2 cm.). Inv. nos. 3622, 4140

Throughout the eighteenth century, French firearms set the standard for European gunmaking. Among the best Parisian gunmakers was Laurent le Languedoc (active 1685–1730/40), who created this flint-lock fowling piece about 1730–40. The bright steel lockplate (below) is inscribed with the maker's name, and the sideplate (bottom), as well as the other stock mounts, is of blued and gilt steel chiseled with hunting themes. The gun is mounted with a magnificent Spanish barrel damascened in silver and encrusted with gold (right). The arms of the owner, Charles of Lorraine, Count of Armagnac, called Prince Charles (1684–1752), appear at the breech end of the barrel, with a presentation inscription at the muzzle end. Length 56³/₁₆ in. (142.7 cm.). *Inv. no. 3618*





The flintlock fowling piece illustrated on these pages was made about 1710 by Armand Bongarde of Düsseldorf (active 1678–d. 1727), one of Germany's foremost gunmakers. Characteristic of Bongarde's style are the elaborately chiseled steel mounts—lockplate (top), sideplate (above), escutcheon (opposite, left), barrel (opposite, center), and top extension of the butt plate (opposite, right)—incorporating trophies of arms, bound captives, figures holding trumpets, and a laurel-wreathed warrior, symbolic of victory and fame. Length 58¹/₈ in. (147.7 cm.). *Inv. no. 3863*





Made about 1690–1700 by Johann Georg Keiser of Vienna, the pair of steel-mounted flintlock holster pistols above were carried by Prince Philipp Erasmus von Liechtenstein. On each grip (left) is a silver escutcheon engraved with the Liechtenstein coat of arms, along with a memorial plaque that records the death of the Prince in 1704 at Castelnovo, in Lombardy, during the War of the Spanish Succession. Length 23¹/₄ in. (59 cm.). *Inv. nos. 3432, 3433*



The flintlock holster pistols opposite were made by Felix Meier of Vienna (1672–1739) about 1720–30. The colorful gilt-brass mounts are typical of Viennese firearms of the eighteenth century and include pommels chiseled with scrollwork and a mask in relief (opposite, top left) and escutcheons (opposite, top right) engraved with the Liechtenstein coat of arms surrounded by the collar of the Order of the Golden Fleece. This pair was presumably made for Prince Joseph Johann Adam von Liechtenstein (1690–1732), a member of that Order from 1721. Length 22³/₁₆ in. (56.3 cm.). *Inv. nos. 3798, 3799*







The flintlock sporting gun on these pages is a work of about 1730 by Joseph Hamerl (1678–1738), one of Vienna's leading gunmakers. The stag hunt engraved on the bright steel lockplate (above) is inspired by the popular hunting prints of Johann Elias Ridinger (1698–1767). The Liechtenstein coat of arms is engraved on the gilt-brass sideplate (below). Length 59 in. (149.8 cm.). *Inv. no. 188*



The flintlock fowling piece below, made about 1730 by Joseph Hamerl of Vienna, is notable for the colorful treatment of the lock. The cock of blued and gold-damascened steel makes a striking contrast with the gilt-brass lockplate engraved with a hunting scene. The sideplate is shown at the bottom left. Length $57\frac{3}{4}$ in. (148.8 cm.). *Inv. no. 3856*



The wheellock rifle continued to be used for hunting in Central Europe until the middle of the eighteenth century. The late example illustrated opposite, one of a pair by Marcus Zelner of Vienna (1693–1758), was made about 1740. Length $42\frac{1}{4}$ in. (107.4 cm.). *Inv. no. 164*





This miquelet-lock fowling piece, signed by Francisco Baeza y Bis of Madrid and dated 1734 on the barrel, is one of the most beautiful Spanish firearms of the eighteenth century. The barrel, lock, and mounts of bright steel are chiseled in relief against a gold ground, and the maple stock is inlaid with silver scrolls. The decoration was inspired by French gunmakers' pattern books. Francisco Bis copied the escutcheon plate (opposite, bottom right) from a pattern book by Simonin published in Paris in 1693, and the lock (top) is after an engraving by DeLacollombe published in 1705. The sideplate (bottom) appears to be the gunmaker's own invention. Length $56\frac{3}{8}$ in. (143.2 cm.). *Inv. no. 3611*



The lock below and the sideplate at the right are from a sporting gun dated 1743, by the Madrid gunmaker Gabriel Algora. The bright steel lock is chiseled on a gold ground with figures of Cupid and a huntress (Diana?) engaged in a stag hunt, the sideplate with a warrior's head and a boar. The decoration of both reflect the classical French taste popular in Spain under the Bourbon monarchs, beginning with the accession of Philip V (1683–1746) in 1700. Length 53⁷/₈ in. (136.8 cm.).
Inv. no. 3614



In 1767 the Holy Roman Emperor Joseph II (1741–90, reigned from 1765) presented Prince Joseph Wenzel von Liechtenstein (1696–1772) with a set of six Spanish miquelet-lock guns dating between about 1710 and 1753. Preserved in virtually pristine condition, they are representative of the highest quality of Spanish gunmaking in the first half of the eighteenth century, and as a set they are unique. Each of the guns is by a different Madrid master, five of whom were gunmakers to the kings of Spain. The guns by Francisco Baeza y Bis and Gabriel Algora are illustrated on pages 32–34. The lockplates of the four other guns are illustrated at the right (from top to bottom): Nicolás Bis, about 1710; Juan Fernández, dated 1729; Juan Santos, dated 1744; and Joaquín de Zelaia, dated 1753. *Inv. nos. (top to bottom) 3608, 3615, 3619, 3607*







The barrels of the six guns illustrated on pages 32–35 exemplify the opulence of decoration for which Spanish barrelsmiths were renowned. The barrel on the gun by Francisco Baeza y Bis (opposite page, third from left) is the most ambitious, with chiseled ornament along most of its length. The other five are more typical of Spanish barrels, their fire-blued surfaces damascened in gold with the gunmaker's name and the date of manufacture. The gunmaker's mark and countermark stamped at the breech are visible at the lower end of each barrel. *Inv. nos. (left to right)* 3608, 3615, 3611, 3614, 3619, 3607

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The publications cited below deal exclusively with the princes of Liechtenstein and their *Gewehr-kammer* and are the primary sources on which the preceding essay has been based. Little known to arms specialists and rarely seen in public, the Liechtenstein firearms collection has nevertheless been exhibited, in part, in exhibitions in Brno in 1885 (see Prokop and Boenheim), Stockerau in 1902, Vaduz in 1952–53, Feldkirch in 1971, and Vienna in 1980. The recent book on Prince Karl I by Haupt publishes the *Gewehr-kammer* inventories of 1596 and 1605, and the article by Wilhelm examines the firearms inventory made at Feldsberg after the death of Prince Johann Adam Andreas in 1712. Those parts of the inventories of Prince Hartmann at Niederabsdorf (1727) and Prince Joseph Wenzel in Vienna (1761) that deal with Viennese firearms have been published by Schedelmann. A general introduction to the Liechtenstein firearms collection is provided by Blair, whereas a detailed discussion of each firearm illustrated in this book can be found in the entries in the catalogue of the exhibition *Liechtenstein: The Princely Collections* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1985).

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The original storage boxes that contained Prince Joseph Wenzel's six Spanish guns (illustrated on pages 32–37) are still preserved. Each has compartments for three guns and is lined with green velvet and trimmed in gold; the guns are protected on the top by a tufted cushion. The exteriors are covered with red velvet and gold galloon.

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Miquelet-lock fowling piece by Francisco Baeza y Bis. Spanish (Madrid), dated 1734

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